



# ***Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission***

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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*Vision: Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 4, 2022

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### **ASMFC Presents Annual Awards of Excellence for 2022**

Arlington, VA - The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission presented its Annual Awards of Excellence to an esteemed group of fishery managers, scientists, and law enforcement officers for their outstanding contributions to fisheries management, science, and law enforcement along the Atlantic coast. Specifically, the 2022 award recipients were Eric Reid and Peter Burns for management and policy contributions; Dr. Conor McManus, Jeff Kipp, Dr. Burton Shank, Dr. Bryan Nuse, Dr. Anna Tucker, and Caitlin Starks for technical and scientific contributions; and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Law Enforcement for law enforcement contributions.

“Every year a great many people contribute to the success of fisheries management along the Atlantic coast. The Commission’s Annual Awards of Excellence recognize outstanding efforts by professionals who have made a difference in the way we manage and conserve our fisheries,” said ASMFC Chair Spud Woodward of Georgia. “I am humbled by the breadth and extent of accomplishments of the recipients and am grateful for their dedication to Atlantic coast fisheries.”

#### **Management and Policy Contributions**

##### ***Eric Reid, Chair of the New England Fishery Management Council and Proxy for ASMFC Legislative Commissioner Senator Susan Sosnowski***

For nearly a decade, Eric Reid has devoted countless hours to the fisheries management process at both the Commission and New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), and increasingly at the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Currently Chair of the NEFMC and longstanding proxy for Rhode Island’s Legislative Commissioner to the ASMFC, Senator Susan Sosnowski, Mr. Reid has been a fervent advocate for the New England commercial fishing industry, consistently bringing the industry’s perspective to actions taken by the Commission and Councils. His ability to be objective and seek creative solutions has often allowed for compromise amongst differing viewpoints. Mr. Reid has been an integral and important voice in numerous high-level actions and discussions including Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument and offshore wind development. His expertise in the commercial fishing industry as well as the fisheries management system allows him to offer unique insights and facilitate management progress on a wide range of important topics. Mr. Reid has played a positive and impactful role in the fisheries management process as a result of his full engagement in the issues before him and his thoughtful consideration of the resource, as well as the economic impacts of proposed actions on the fishing industry.

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

### ***Peter Burns, NOAA Fisheries***

A valued federal partner to the Commission and its member states for over 15 years, Peter Burns has served as NOAA Fisheries' lead on numerous Commission management boards and sections, including those for American lobster, northern shrimp, bluefish, spiny dogfish, and tautog, providing sound advice and guidance on the management of these species. He also has made tremendous contributions to federal lobster management, coordinating and leading the Lobster Trap Tag Program, which constituted a fundamental shift in interstate lobster management. His efforts ensured that state and federal trap allocations were aligned and future transfers were correctly implemented and tracked. Mr. Burns fostered productive relationships with the states and industry members on measures put forward by the industry at the Large Whale Take Reduction Team. This action helped to build trust and buy-in to Commission/Take Reduction Plan processes. He also attempted to negotiate alternative measures to the Area 4 (South of Long Island) seasonal closure, coordinating a meeting with industry members and bordering states, putting forward numerous solutions for equivalent measures in an attempt to eliminate the closure. While ultimately unsuccessful, these efforts highlight his commitment to the Commission process as well as his commitment to collaboration and innovation.

### **Scientific and Technical Contributions**

#### ***Dr. Conor McManus, Jeff Kipp, and Dr. Burton Shank***

Based on their significant contributions to the 2020 Benchmark Stock Assessment for American Lobster, Dr. Conor McManus, Jeff Kipp, and Dr. Burton Shank are being recognized for their exceptional work and initiative on the American Lobster Stock Assessment Subcommittee (SAS). As lead modelers for the assessment, Dr. McManus, Mr. Kipp, and Dr. Shank contributed improved and novel analyses to more effectively characterize stock status for Southern New England and the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank stocks. Throughout the assessment's development, these three individuals consistently brought innovative ideas and technical expertise to SAS discussions. Their contributions and resourcefulness kept the assessment moving forward despite the complex challenges posed by the incorporation of new data to address environmental impacts on the lobster stocks. The contributions of these three individuals were essential to the successful completion and peer review of the 2020 assessment, as well as the adoption of updated reference points by the Management Board.

#### ***Dr. Bryan Nuse, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, and Dr. Anna Tucker, Iowa Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife***

Dr. Bryan Nuse, a Research Scientist with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, and Dr. Anna Tucker, Assistant Professor at Iowa Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit, were instrumental in the development of the revised Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework for the management of horseshoe crabs with consideration for the threatened red knot. In October 2019, the ARM Subcommittee was directed to revise the ARM Framework to incorporate more available data and update the software platform. The ARM Subcommittee recognized it would need expertise in adaptive management and quantitative ecology to successfully model the two species and revise the ARM Framework. Dr. Nuse was added to the committee as an ecologist with experience in bird conservation, adaptive management, and population models. Dr. Tucker joined the effort because she developed a state-of-the-science integrated population model for red knots as part of her PhD thesis with Auburn University and postdoctoral research with the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. While development of the ARM Framework was a lengthy process involving many collaborators, this substantial achievement would not have been possible without the contributions of Drs. Nuse and Tucker.

#### ***Caitlin Starks, Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission***

Caitlin Starks, ASMFC Fishery Management Plan Coordinator for numerous species, is being recognized for her meticulous and thorough preparation prior to meetings, her command in leading the meetings in an effective and efficient manner, and her timely and detailed meeting follow-ups. In particular, Ms. Starks steady support and guidance in leading the Shad Technical Committee through many challenging meetings as they prepared the 2021 Benchmark Stock Assessment for American Shad. Disagreements between Committee members within a meeting

routinely occurred and Ms. Starks would often offer reasonable solutions that allowed opposing sides to reach compromise and advance forward. During the assessment, Ms. Starks did a phenomenal job of keeping the Committee moving through the grind of completing what could have been a daunting task. She often went above the call of duty by having a multitude of meetings ensuring all states were well informed; all Committee members were engaged in and supportive of the assessment; all potential data sources had been identified and thoroughly vetted for potential use in the assessment; and all questions from members were answered before a final product was affirmed.

## **Law Enforcement Contributions**

### ***New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Law Enforcement***

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Law Enforcement is recognized for its outstanding efforts to control illegal harvest of Atlantic striped bass from Raritan Bay and its tributaries. New Jersey Conservation Police Officers from both the inland and marine regions throughout the state were involved with the operation across New Jersey's portion of the watershed. In December 2021, more than 200 summonses were issued and more than 500 illegal striped bass were confiscated. Efforts continued throughout the spring of 2022. From early March to the middle of May 2022, approximately 4,000 inspections were conducted over the course of 650 patrol hours within Raritan Bay, Newark Bay, Arthur Kill, and the Hudson River. These efforts resulted in over 300 summonses being issued for violations including undersized fish, over the limit catch, fishing during the closed season, and interference with the duties of a conservation officer. When possible, some of the seized fish were donated to food banks, while others were submitted to New Jersey Bureau of Marine Fisheries for the collection of biological data. The dedication and commitment of the Bureau's Conservation Police Officers to the enforcement of sustainable fisheries regulations is truly worthy of recognition.

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